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Peachtree Road Project: Public's Voice Heard in Planning Process - No Bike Lanes

Georgia DOT announced today that, after intensive review of public comments and public needs, the Peachtree Road project from Deering Road to Pharr Road will move forward. However, it will be without the addition of bike lanes.

"This is the public involvement process at work," said GDOT Chief Engineer Meg Pirkle. "Throughout the planning and development of this project, we have consistently looked for meaningful ways to engage the public; to listen to the concerns and ideas of various audiences; and to make sure that their input and comments were properly reflected."

Georgia DOT's policy of complete streets—the practice of planning, designing and constructing streets and roadways that integrate and balance the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders and motor vehicles—was at the base of the planning and considerations for the project. The Peachtree Road corridor carries an average of 37,000 to 43,000 vehicles daily, and with over 800 crashes in the last five years, GDOT has been focused on identifying opportunities to improve safety and operations for all users.

In 2013, the Department began working with the City of Atlanta and the Buckhead CID to identify improvement opportunities that incorporated the identified bike routes in the Connect Atlanta Plan and the Cycle Atlanta Plan. GDOT staff worked diligently to ensure that feedback from the City, Buckhead CID, stakeholders and the community played a major role in the proposed alternatives. After extensive study of existing conditions and traffic modeling, the decision was made to provide continuous Two Way Left Turn Lanes (TWLTL); left turn lanes at intersections; bike lanes from Deering Road to Peachtree Battle Avenue; and traffic signal modifications and timing adjustments. These recommendations would improve lane utilization and traffic flow along the corridor.

In late October, the Department held a Public Information Open House to discuss the proposed alternatives with the community and to receive feedback. More than 2000 comments were received with over 70 percent against the project's bike lanes component. As a result, the Department made the decision to move forward with the safety and operational improvements that can be made, but to do so without the bike lanes. There will be three lanes NB, two lanes SB, and a center turn lane from Deering Road north to a likely transition point at Peachtree Battle; and three lanes SB, two lanes NB, and a center turn lane up to Pharr Road. Each intersection will now have a dedicated left turn lane. The Department will move forward with the design work and anticipates a fall 2016 construction date.

"The goal has always been to seek the best project for the community and the users of the corridor," Pirkle added. "While we believe in the merits of the project as proposed, we must also consider the needs of the community and recognize that every community has a say in what their transportation facility looks like. This project is a shining example of the process at work."

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“Although bike lanes will not be part of this project, we encourage our local partners to explore opportunities that reflect the recommendation in the Connect Atlanta Plan and the Cycle Atlanta Plan of providing bike facilities in the area,” Pirkle added.

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